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EXAMINER

ABEL JALIL, NEVEEN

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2175

DATE MAILED: 04/09/2003

5

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/676,365

Applicant(s)

BLINN ET AL.

Examiner

Neveen Abel-Jalil

Art Unit

2175

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-49 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-49 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) ____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

DOV POPOVICI
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2100

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

2. Claims 1-3, 5-9, 13-23, 25-28, 32-39, and 41-49 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Call (U.S. Patent No. 6,418,441).

As to claim 1, Call discloses a method comprising:

(a) hosting, on a server (See column 27, lines 55-67), a database of specification data of products of a plurality of different manufacturers (See column 27, lines 36-51), the product specification data in the database being arranged in predefined product classes (See column 25, lines 37-60);

(b) defining, for each product class, a schema for the entry of specification data of products in that product class (See column 25, lines 37-60);

(c) providing an interface for use by product manufacturers for entry of new product specification data into the database and for modifying existing product specification data in the database (See column 27, lines 1-13, also see column 12, lines 57-67, and column 13, lines 1-3), the interface requiring each manufacturer to use a same schema when entering or modifying

Art Unit: 2175

product specification data in a particular product class (See column 25, lines 1-36, wherein “same” reads on “universal”); and

(d) in exchange for remuneration from a given manufacturer, providing that manufacturer with access to the interface and to its respective product specification data in the database for use outside of the database (See column 31, lines 49-60, wherein “external” reads on “Internet”, also see column 26, lines 36-67, wherein “remuneration” reads on “credit card number”, and wherein “interface” reads on “web browser”).

As to claim 2, Call discloses wherein (d) comprises permitting the manufacturer to query product specification data from the database (See column 32, lines 51-65, wherein “query” reads on “search”, also see column 33, lines 1-10, wherein “data from the database” reads on “indexing services... locate”).

As to claim 3, Call discloses wherein (d) comprises providing a manufacturer with a link to a Web page generated on behalf of the manufacturer that contains product specification data requested by the manufacturer (See column 32, lines 27-50, wherein “link” reads on “URL”).

As to claims 5, 22, and 38, Call discloses wherein (d) comprises exporting product specification data to a manufacturer in one of an Excel spreadsheet format (XLS), an Extensible Markup Language (XML) format (See column 32, lines 6-15, also see column 23, lines 24-32), and a CSV format.

Art Unit: 2175

As to claims 6, and 25, Call discloses wherein (d) further comprises charging each manufacturer desiring to have access to the database a fee for such access (See column 14, lines 15-28, wherein “fee” reads on “schedule payment”, and wherein “manufacturer” reads on “retailer”).

As to claims 7, and 26, Call discloses wherein the fee is in the form of a monetary payment (See column 14, lines 15-28, wherein “monetary payment” reads on “check or electronic funds”).

As to claims 8, and 27, Call discloses wherein the fee comprises a one-time fee (See column 11, lines 42-52).

As to claims 9, and 28, Call discloses wherein the fee comprises a periodically recurring fee (See column 28, lines 1-9, wherein “periodically recurring fee” reads on “periodic payments”).

As to claims 13, 18, and 34, Call discloses wherein (c) comprises permitting each manufacturer to add and edit the product specification data for a single product in the database (See column 12, lines 17-30, also see column 12, lines 57-67, and column 13, lines 1-3).

Art Unit: 2175

As to claims 14, 19, and 35, Call discloses wherein (c) comprises permitting a manufacturer to add or edit the product specification data for multiple products in a single data feed (See column 24, lines 50-65).

As to claims 15, 20, and 36, Call discloses wherein (c) further comprises accepting the product specification data for multiple products in the single data field in one of all Excel spreadsheet format (XLS), an Extensible Markup Language (XML) format (See column 28, lines 27-41), and a CSV format.

As to claims 16, and 32, Call discloses a computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions stored thereon comprising component that form a system for enabling an entity to serve as an application service provider with respect to product specification data of a plurality of manufacturers (See column 31, lines 62-67, and column 32, lines 1-5, wherein “application service provider “ reads on “view product information... via a shared product information server”), the components comprising:

a database of specifications of products of the plurality of different manufacturers (See column 27, lines 36-51), the product specifications in the database being arranged in predefined product classes (See column 25, lines 37-60); and

an interface for use by the plurality of manufacturers (See column 27, lines 1-13, also see column 12, lines 57-67, and column 13, lines 1-3) for the entry of specifications of products in a given product class, there being defined, for each product class, a schema for the entry of specifications of products in that product class, the interface requiring each manufacturer to use

Art Unit: 2175

the defined schema for a given product class when entering product specification data for products in that class (See column 25, lines 1-36, wherein “when entering” reads on “universal”), the interface further permitting each manufacturer that provides remuneration to the entity to access its respective product specification data in the database for use outside of the database (See column 31, lines 49-60, wherein “external” reads on “Internet”, also see column 26, lines 36-67, wherein “remuneration” reads on “credit card number”, and wherein “interface” reads on “web browser”).

As to claim 17, Call discloses wherein the interface (See column 34, lines 51-61, wherein “interface” reads on “web browser”) further comprises a component that a manufacturer can use to search for and list product specification data stored in the database for its products (See column 9, lines 20-36).

As to claims 21, and 37, Call discloses the interface permits a manufacturer (See column 6, lines 1-28, wherein “permits” reads on “password”) to query product specification data from the database for use outside of the database (See column 8, lines 41-51).

As to claims 23, and 39, Call discloses wherein the interface component is capable of providing the manufacturer with a link to a Web page generated on behalf of a manufacturer that contains product specification data from the database (See column 8, lines 55-67, also see column 2, lines 30-39).

Art Unit: 2175

As to claim 33, Call discloses wherein the interface component further comprises a component that a manufacturer can use to search for and list product specification data stored in the database for its products (See column 27, lines 26-35, also see column 33, lines 1-16).

As to claims 41, 44, and 47, Call discloses wherein the remuneration is in the form of permission (See column 6, lines 1-28, wherein "permits" reads on "password") from the manufacturer to use the product specification data in connection with another method (See column 21, lines 24-39, also see column 13, lines 47-61).

As to claims 42, 45, and 48, Call discloses wherein said use of the product specification data in connection with another method comprises using the product specification data in connection with product offers hosted by an online shopping Web site (See column 30, lines 52-65, also see column 24, lines 57-65).

As to claims 43, 46, and 49, Call discloses wherein the interface operates to pull product specification data from a manufacturer and to format it in accordance with a respective product class schema (See column 25, lines 37-60).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person

Art Unit: 2175

having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 4, 10-12, 24, 29-31, and 40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Call (U.S. Patent No. 6,418,441) in view of Walker et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,405,174).

As to claim 4, Call does not disclose wherein (d) further comprises partnering with the manufacturer to permit the generated Web page to be co-branded.

Walker et al. discloses wherein (d) further comprises partnering with the manufacturer to permit the generated Web page to be co-branded (See Walker et al. column 3, lines 18-27, wherein "manufacturer" reads on "merchant").

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Call to include wherein (d) further comprises partnering with the manufacturer to permit the generated Web page to be co-branded.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Call by the teaching of Walker et al. to include wherein (d) further comprises partnering with the manufacturer to permit the generated Web page to be co-branded because it always for partnership in business across the glob thereby reducing business costs.

As to claims 10, and 29, Call does not disclose wherein the fee is based on usage of the database by the manufacturers.

Walker et al. discloses wherein the fee is based on usage of the database by the manufacturers (See column 13, lines 1-19, wherein "usage" reads on "rate").

Art Unit: 2175

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Call to include wherein the fee is based on usage of the database by the manufacturers.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Call by the teaching of Walker et al. to include wherein the fee is based on usage of the database by the manufacturers based on a number of times that the manufacturer accesses the database to retrieve product specification data because it provides for an adequate method to control inventory and create revenue thereby reducing business costs.

As to claims 11, and 30, Call as modified discloses wherein the fee for a given manufacturer is based on the volume of product information stored in the database by that manufacturer (See column 27, lines 36-67, and column 28, lines 1-8, wherein "volume" reads on "quantity", and wherein "fee" reads on "payment").

As to claims 12, and 31, Call as modified discloses wherein the fee for a given manufacturer is based on a number of times that the manufacturer accesses the database to retrieve product specification data (See Walker et al. column 12, lines 36-50, wherein "number of times" reads on "rate").

As to claims 24, and 40, Call does not disclose wherein the Web page is co-branded by both the manufacturer and the entity that operates the system.

Walker et al. discloses wherein the Web page is co-branded by both the manufacturer and the entity that operates the system (See Walker et al. column 3, lines 18-27, wherein "manufacturer" reads on "merchant").

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Call to include wherein the Web page is co-branded by both the manufacturer and the entity that operates the system.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Call by the teaching of Walker et al. to include wherein the Web page is co-branded by both the manufacturer and the entity that operates the system because it provides for a way to increase revenues for both sides and allowing for greater exposure in business.

Conclusion

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Kramer et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,327,574) teaches hierarchical models of consumer attributes and co-branding.


6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Neveen Abel-Jalil whose telephone number is 703-305-8114. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00AM-4: 30PM.

Art Unit: 2175

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Dov Popovici can be reached on 703-305-3830. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-746-7239 for regular communications and 703-746-7240 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-305-3900.

Neveen Abel-Jalil
March 31, 2003


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